



## NEWARK PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

CITY HALL, ROOM 214, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102  
(201) 733-8004

### PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, March 3, 1982

CONTACT: BERNARD MOORE, 733-3687  
PANDORA REYNOLDS, 733-3809

### NEWARK AGENCY PLANS TO REHAB AT LEAST 100 HOUSES THIS YEAR

The new director of Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Newark said today the corporation plans to rehabilitate as many houses this year as it has in the past four years.

Lawrence M. Morgan, who became director last September, noted that 100 of the 1,800 houses located in the Weequahic neighborhood, the project's target area, have been rehabilitated since 1977. He hopes another 100 will be done in 1982.

NHS is a non-profit housing corporation which makes low-interest home improvement loans under the assumption that community residents working together with local lenders and Newark's municipal government can help to revitalize neighborhoods.

Sixteen home improvement loans have been approved by the Neighborhood Housing Services' loan committee since Morgan took charge.

The new staff, which NHS acquired a short time before Morgan arrived, and D. Monroe Alexander, assistant director and the only remaining employee from the previous personnel, are responsible for the growing influx of applicants.

In the past four years, the NHS office has changed staff four times. "As a result of the repeated turnovers, many housing rehab jobs in process developed into problems and the financial records were not maintained," Morgan reported.

Fourteen homeowners who had received home improvement loans stopped payment last year, because they were not being billed. All of the homeowners except two have resumed payment, increasing the total number of dollars NHS collects each month from \$66 to \$2000, Morgan noted.

The agency, whose board of directors includes community and business leaders, serves an 84-block area bounded by Elizabeth and Lyons avenues, Clinton Place, Route 78 and the Hillside border.

March 3, 1982

Every homeowner in NHS's designated area, with no more than four dwellings, is eligible for NHS assistance in rehabilitation counseling, home maintenance and loan counseling. Morgan said that loans are available at below-market interest rates and that a maximum of \$15,000 can be borrowed for up to 15 years from funds it receives from the city's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. If it is loaning out money received from the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp., NHS does not have any specific loan requirements to meet.

The business community provides NHS with its total operating budget. This year the operating budget total \$100,000. Funds from the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp., which oversees the operation of all 155 NHS program across the nation, and city contributions made from the Community Development Block Grant are designated primarily for housing rehabilitation.

When NHS opened its doors four years ago it received \$200,000 from CDBG, and March 17 the City Council is expected to vote on granting NHS an additional \$100,000, Morgan added.

So far NHS has close to \$180,000 in funds loaned out, and despite the economic downturn Morgan expects the total to rise even higher during the spring and summer months. "Most people apply for home improvement loans then," he added.

For further information contact Neighborhood Housing Services, 430 Chancellor Ave., 923-3308.

-End-